21,557 telephone exchanges as on 1-4-2000 and 44.2 lakh telephones as on 1-3-2000 are also working in the rural areas in the country. New Telephone exchanges are being opened and capacity of existing exchanges is being extended as per the requirement to provide telephone connections.

Computerised Telephone Exchange in Assam

2635. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of computerised Trunk Telephone Exchanges proposed to be set up in the State of Assam during the year 2000-2001, district-wise ;

(b) the details of the above telephone exchanges which have been set up in the State during the last three years ; and

(c) the details of telephone exchanges extended in Assam during this period ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) No Computerized Trunk Exchange is proposed to be set up in the State of Assam during the year 2000-2001.

(b) One Computerized Trunk Exchange was set up at Guwahati during the last three years.

(c) No Computerized Trunk Exchange was extended during the last three years. The details of telephone exchanges opened and extended during the last three years is given in the annexure. [*See* Appendix 189, Annexure No. 67]

Cellular Service of MTNL, in Delhi and Mumbai

2636. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that MTNL proposes to start its CWN cellular service in Delhi and Mumbai :

(b) if so, by when it is likely to take off ; and

(c) what are the main features of the service ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) Yes, Sir. MTNL proposes to start its own GSM based cellular Mobile service in Delhi & Mumbai.

(b) It is likely to take off in the 3rd Quarter of this Year.